

# **YMCA Childcare Program Handbook**

**2009-2010 school year**



**Sonoma County Family YMCA  
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## Welcome

### Sonoma County Family YMCA Childcare Program

Welcome to the YMCA Childcare Program. We are pleased to be providing child care services to your family!

The YMCA is committed to the healthy development of your child through a "child centered" environment that provides for individual attention and encouragement as well as group participation. Our goal is to provide a safe, secure and caring place in which s/he can make friends, learn new skills, continue to develop positive self-esteem and have fun!

Please keep this handbook as a reference to answer your questions regarding program policies, fees, etc. If at any time you have questions, concerns, or suggestions, please feel free to speak to your Site Director or any one of us.

Again, welcome!

Jeremy Hodgdon  
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## **YMCA Mission Statement**

The Sonoma County Family YMCA seeks to enhance the lives of all people through programs designed to develop spirit, mind and body. We are dedicated to the values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

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## **Program Philosophy**

At the YMCA Childcare Program, we seek to expand children's potential by providing a supportive, safe, creative, fun environment in which they can develop socially, intellectually, physically and emotionally.

Our program objectives are:

1. To provide a program of creative and appealing learning experiences for children through supervised recreational activities.
2. To provide an opportunity for the child's development of self confidence and a foundation for socialization skills.
3. To create an environment that fosters opportunities for the development of the child in the areas of:
  - a. Health and Nutrition
  - b. Physical Education
  - c. Skills Development
  - d. Interpersonal Relationships
  - e. Self-Awareness and Confidence
  - f. Developmental Assets
  - g. Activate Youth
  - h. Self-Sufficiency
  - i. Academic Skills

## Program Information

Who is Served: The YMCA Childcare Program is open to children in grades kindergarten through 6th who are enrolled in any of the following schools or districts:

Cotati-Rohnert Park Unified School District - Hahn, Evergreen, and Monte Vista Elementary Schools  
Bennett Valley Union School District - Yulupa and Strawberry Elementary Schools  
Santa Rosa City School District - Biella Elementary School  
Piner-Olivet Union School District - Schaefer, Olivet, Piner Elementary and Jack London  
Sonoma Valley Unified School District - Prestwood Elementary  
Petaluma City School District - Penngrove, Grant Elementary and McNear Elementary

The Sonoma County Family YMCA does not discriminate based on race, color, gender, national origin or religion.

Transportation: Transportation may be available on school days through your school district. Contact the district office for more information.

Year: The YMCA Childcare Program calendar runs from the first day of school through the last day of school (excluding holidays as indicated).

During the summer months, we may operate a Day Camp at **some of these locations**. This is a separate program from day care and you must sign up for this program separately.

Hours: We are open from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. (We cannot be responsible for children dropped off prior to 7:00 AM). A minimum of 7 children a day must be enrolled in order to provide services before school and to PM kindergartners who would go to morning childcare. If the minimum is not achieved, then the YMCA reserves the right to change operational hours to conform to AM kindergarten children arriving at approximately 11:30 AM. (Kindergarten Program varies to meet the kindergarten structure of each school.)

Drop-In: If space is available we may be able to take a limited amount of children on a drop-in basis. The Drop-In fee charged would be **\$5.90** per hour, 2 hour minimum per day. No sibling discount will be given. Approved Drop-in participants must pay a \$50 drop-in deposit for each child. This deposit will be held until care is either cancelled, changed to an option plan, applied to last month bill, or refunded after the end of the school year. During winter and spring breaks drop-in rates do not apply. If care is needed, you will be charged the full day rate regardless of hours used.

Days of Operations: The YMCA Childcare Program is open Monday through Friday on all school days. In addition, we offer full day programs at selected sites on the following days:

- Lincoln's Birthday
- "Minimum Days" scheduled by school
- Winter Vacation Break (2 weeks-available at selected sites)
- Good Friday
- All school staff development days (approximately 2-3)
- Spring Vacation Break (1 week-available at selected sites)

We are also open until noon on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve provided a minimum of 16 children are enrolled for care. (We reserve the right to not be open on these days if the minimum enrollment is not met.)

During Winter, Spring and Summer Vacations, the YMCA may operate the site as a Day Camp. Subject to space availability, the YMCA reserves the right to provide open enrollment to non-district children during these breaks.

**If care will be offered at your site, a minimum enrollment of 16 children is needed in order to provide this care. You will be given ample notice as to which sites will be available during the breaks.** If the minimum enrollment is not met, other sites will be available where your child may attend.

If you choose to enroll your child in a payment option that does not include the full days as listed, but find you need care, that may be available on a first come, first served basis. You will be asked to sign-up in advance for these days so we may staff appropriately (see fee schedule).

Closed Days: The Program is closed in observance of the following:

- Veterans Day
- Martin Luther King's Birthday
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday after Thanksgiving Day
- Presidents' Day
- Christmas Eve (**closed at noon**)
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve (**closed at noon**)
- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day

Full Day Programs:

You must give notice if you need care on these days whether you have contracted for it or not. ***If you fail to give notice by deadline and then need care, you will be assessed an additional \$15 fee.*** Failure to give notice of whether you need care or not could result in the program not being able to provide care for you on this day due to limited staffing. **NO credits** are given for unused days. **(Please send your child with a healthy AM snack and lunch on these days.)**

Fee Schedule:

Please refer to the current fee schedule for the 2009-2010 school year. **The monthly fees are based on a total number of school days spread evenly over 9 months, plus one half month.** Half month will be either August or June, depending on your child's school calendar. Your bill will not be prorated for winter break or spring break. Your bill for the half month portion of care will include a charge of 50% or 25%, depending on the site your child is attending.

Four Options are available to you:

- Option A: Only includes childcare on school days
- Option B: Includes childcare on school days and full day programs, except winter and spring breaks.
- Option C: Includes childcare on school days, full days as well as winter and spring breaks.
- Option D: Includes '09-'10 school year (including full days) & 11 weeks '10 summer. **Only 5 days per week schedule available.** Three weeks vacation will be available for credit. This is a 12 month commitment and you will be billed from September through August.

***In order to sign up for Option D, you must start the program by September. You may not switch from another Option Plan to Option D once the school year begins.***

\*Penn Grove families only have the choice of Option A and C. Option C for Penn Grove includes two off-track (Fall and Spring) breaks but does not include winter break.

You must select the option prior to starting your child in care. If you decide to switch to another option from Option D during the school year **NO CREDIT** will be given for funds placed into the summer program for this care and not used (NO EXCEPTIONS).

**Option Change:** **Option A,B,C:** ***You may only change your option prior to the beginning of winter break***

**Option D:** ***You may not change to Option D once September has begun.*** If you change from Option D to another option no credit will be given for the additional money paid into the account. Option changes are not available after this time. Anytime you change options, a Change Request Form must be filled out prior to the

change going into effect. Before the change becomes effective, it must be approved by the Site Director and the Program Office.

Discounts:

Additional children in the family receive a 10% discount on fees. Discount is taken on the lesser amount. The discount only applies to the current contracted fee schedule. No second child discount will be given for any additional care (e.g.: An Option A person needing care on a Full Day or Drop-in Care).

Credit for Non-Use of Childcare:

Credit/refunds are not given for any single days missed (except extended illness or vacation - see Absence Policy).

Registration Fee: An annual, non-refundable registration/Program Membership fee of \$55 (each additional child in the family is \$45 each) is required at the time of enrollment. Payment of this fee guarantees a space for your child in the program. ***This fee will not be refunded if you cancel or your child does not attend.***

Priority registration for current participants is held each Spring for Fall enrollment.

Emergency Contact Fee:

As an added step towards disaster preparedness, the Sonoma County Family YMCA has partnered with Convergent Mobile. In the event of an emergency where parents need to be notified as quickly as possible, the Sonoma County Family YMCA will now be able to send out a text message to all childcare parents at once. This allows us to be able to reach all parents instantly with important information and directions. Your cell phone number will be stored on a secure server and only used in critical situations. You will not be spammed with YMCA messages. To support the cost of this service, a mandatory \$10 per family emergency contact fee will be charged each year at the time of registration. If you have any questions about this additional safety feature please contact us at 544-1829 for more details.

Fee Payments: **Fees are due by the 1st of each month.** You will receive your bill in the mail. However, if you don't receive a statement you will still be responsible for the payment by the 1st of the month. For all late payments, a **\$20 late fee** (flat rate, not per day) will be assessed (separate mailing). You may call the Program Office at 544-1829 to inquire about your balance.

Effective for the '09-'10 school year all accounts will be required to complete a Child Care Payment Agreement Form giving Bank Draft Authorization (primary form of payment). Note that the secondary form of payment is optional and is not intended as the primary form of payment.

If you want a due date different from the 1st, it is required that this be prepaid in the month preceding, not after the 1st of the month for which childcare is charged. Payments received after the 1st of the month will be considered delinquent.

Checks or money orders payable to the Sonoma County Family YMCA must be mailed to either the Program Office at 1207 College Ave or the Billing Office at 1203 College Ave, Santa Rosa, CA 95404. Payments may not be made at the child care sites. ***Cash payments are only accepted at the YMCA Program Office.***

**Payments must reach the YMCA Billing Department no later than the 1st of the month to avoid the late fee. Payment envelopes will accompany your bill. If you have already signed up for ACH Auto Draft, you will never accrue a late fee unless the draft is rejected by your bank.**

The Sonoma County Family YMCA reserves the right to discontinue service to anyone falling delinquent in their childcare payments until all charges are cleared.

Outstanding balances will result not only in discontinued care, but in becoming ineligible for priority registration for Sunshine Company, YMCA Camp, and other YMCA programs.

All participants are responsible for payment on time even if the 1st falls on a day that your child does not attend (e.g., during holiday breaks, full day programs, etc).

Should your child become ineligible to attend the program due to nonpayment and your child is not reinstated, it will be treated as a cancellation. No credit will be given for days not attended during the remainder of the month in which this occurs. Additionally there may be a prorated charge for the following month to satisfy 2 week notification requirement.

Returned Checks/Expired card numbers: Parents will be charged an additional \$25 for any checks returned unpaid by your bank. Two such returns will result in the requirement to pay by cashier's check, money order, or cash payments only - NO EXCEPTIONS. Returned checks must be cleared within 5 days of the date of notification in order to continue child care services. Once the check has been returned payment on returned checks must be made in person at the Santa Rosa Program Office. This policy also applies to expired or declined cards being used to automatically pay fees.

Staff: The primary role for all staff is to provide a safe, secure, stimulating environment for all of the children in our care. The Sonoma County Family YMCA's goal is to employ a trained, qualified childcare staff that sincerely cares about your child and is available to share your concerns.

All staff members meet the requirements as outlined by the State of California Community Care Licensing. Directors generally have an AA or BA degree and a variety of experiences. Teachers have a minimum of 12 units and experience. Teacher Aides must have experience working with children and are encouraged to obtain college credit courses. Educational requirements may be in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Recreation or related coursework. Staff receive additional training through the YMCA (i.e., CPR, First Aid, Child Abuse Awareness/Prevention, etc.). Staff/Child ratio is 1:14.

Sample of a Typical Day: **(The schedule and times will vary depending on site and Kindergarten Schedule)**

AM Program

7:00 - 8:30 AM	Indoor Quiet Games
8:30 - 9:30 AM	Morning Circle Time & Games
9:30 - 9:45 AM	Snack Time
9:45 - 11:25 AM	Crafts, Games, Special Events, Lunch

PM Program

12:00 - 1:00 PM	Lunch & Quiet Time
1:00 - 2:00 PM	Indoor & Outdoor Games
2:30 - 3:15 PM	Check In, Snack, Free Play
3:20 - 3:30 PM	Group Gathering
3:30 - 4:15 PM	Small Group Time
4:15 - 5:00 PM	Stations
5:00 - 6:00 PM	Clean-up/Quiet Games

Program: Activities are developed to encourage children to have fun, develop new skills and to encourage self-esteem. A variety of daily activities may include: arts, crafts, games, sports, skits, music, special events, guests and more.

For younger children activities may include; dramatic play, large motor skill development and emphasis on basic social skill development.

## **CHART OF POSSIBLE FEES AND CREDITS**

Monthly Tuition	Refer to Payment Schedule
Registration Fee	\$55(1 <sup>st</sup> Child) \$45(each additional Child)
Emergency Communication Fee	\$10 per family
Weekly Early Dismissal	\$15/monthly(for up to 1 hr early release) \$37/monthly( for up to 3 hr early release)
Full Day Fee	\$40 per day
Extra Hours Charge	\$5.10/hour (1 hour minimum, over contracted rate)
Late Pick-up after 6PM	\$1 per minute or portion thereof
Late Payment Fee	\$20 after the 1 <sup>st</sup> of the Month
Sibling Discount	10% off Tuition and Early Dismissal Fee
Drop-In Fee	\$5.90/hour-2 hour minimum (upon approval or space availability)
Research (including photocopies)	\$25.00 per hour (2 hour minimum charge)
<u>Returned Check Fee:</u>	\$25.00

Full Day Program Notice Fee: If you fail to notify the YMCA of needing care for these days by the deadline date, you will be assessed an additional \$15 fee.

**Reminder: The Fee structure is based on the total number of school days in the year and pro-rated over 9 and one half months. This means your monthly payment will remain the same every month (except the prorated half month will be half the regular fee) regardless of how many days are in the month. Therefore for December, April or Penngrove 3-week break your payment does not change.**

Exceptions to the above:

If you are Option D you are paying the same monthly amount for *12 MONTHS*, because these fees are inclusive of both school year care and summer care.

If you are Option A or B and you need care during Winter and Spring Break, then there will be an extra charge, this is in addition to your regular monthly tuition, because this care is not already included in your Option.

If you are Option C or D and you submit a vacation request, it needs to be completed in writing 14 days in advance. Vacation must be a minimum of 5 consecutive days taken in full one week increments (i.e.: if 8 days only 5 days credit would be given) in order to receive a credit.

## HOW DOES OPTION D WORK?

This option is only available at the start of the school year. You will pay 12 months (September through August) for care.

What will the option cover?

Approximately 9 ½ months during school year (including Full Days, Winter/Spring Breaks) and 11 weeks of summer camp (camp of your choice, ***excluding Resident, Caravans and Moving-On Camps***).

How much vacation will I receive?

A total of 3 weeks during the 12 months. The 3 weeks of vacation must be taken within the billing cycle, which runs September 1<sup>st</sup> through August 30<sup>th</sup>. You must give two weeks written notice of vacation in order to receive a credit. Vacation must be taken as stated. ***If you choose not to use 11 weeks of camp and have taken your vacation credit, there will be no refund for the difference.***

If I start out by choosing another option, can I switch to Option D?

No. You may only contract for Option D at the onset of the school year. Although, if you start with Option D, you may switch to another option if your plans change. However, if you switch from Option D to another option, no credit will be given for the money paid toward camp. The idea is for this option to be contracted for the entire 12 months.

What if I normally receive Outreach during the summer?

If you contract for Option D, Outreach won't apply for the summer months. If your care is paid by an outside agency, the contract must state that they agree to pay the contracted rate for the 12 months.

What type of sibling discount will I receive?

The normal discount of 10% for each additional child.

Will I still need to register for Summer Camp?

In order to secure a space for your child(ren), you'll need to fill out registration info and select camps for the summer. However, you won't need to put money down for deposits if you are attending Session 1-6. Option D does not cover any of the specialty camps, e.g, travel or resident camps.

Will my payment always be due on the 1<sup>ST</sup> of the month?

Yes, even in the summer your payment will be due the ***1<sup>ST</sup> of every month***.

What other costs might I incur above the contracted rate?

You will be charged extra for the following: if you child's school has an early dismissal day, if you use extra hours above your contracted time, late pick-up charges or late payment charges.

## Policies

Dual Custody: The enrolling parent is the responsible party for financial and registration arrangements. If two separate schedules need to be set up, it is the responsibility of the parents to sign up separately; this would include paying separate registration fees and filling out two financial agreements. Days and hours for which each parent is responsible must be designated. A copy of custody papers and any current restraining orders must be submitted, to be kept in the child's file, prior to the child's attendance. If parents have a split account (separate accounts with each paying half for same schedule) the delinquency of either payment would subject both accounts to possible suspension.

Child Protective Services: As mandated by state law, the YMCA staff must and will report suspected instances of child abuse to Child Protective Services.

Change of Emergency Information: It is important that the YMCA child care facility maintains current and accurate records on each child so that parents can be contacted in case of an emergency. This information includes: addresses, home and work telephone numbers, work locations and names of authorized individuals to pick up your child(ren). It is extremely important to your child's safety and well-being that we be informed of changes. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO NOTIFY THE SITE DIRECTOR OF ANY CHANGES.** We assume no responsibility for missed communication resulting from incorrect information.

Sign In and Out/Releases: No child will be allowed to leave the center with anyone other than the enrolling parent, guardian, or other persons listed in the authorization list without specific written instruction from the parent. Proof of identification will be required if the person is on the release list, but is unfamiliar to the staff.

**All AM children and morning Kindergartners must be signed in by parent/guardian.** Failure to do so may result in a fine of \$10 after the 3<sup>rd</sup> time not being signed in.

Each day upon arriving at the childcare site, children are to report to the Site Director (or other designated staff) to sign them in. **PARENTS/GUARDIANS OR AUTHORIZED PERSONS MUST SIGN THEIR CHILDREN OUT AT THE END OF THE DAY.** (Siblings or the child him/herself cannot do this.) Full signature is required.

Due to licensing regulations, the PARENT/GUARDIAN must sign their child in/out unless there are extenuating circumstances. In the case of extenuating circumstances, a special exception to this policy must be requested. If an exception is granted, other arrangements can be made with the Site Director. It is still the parent's responsibility to maintain continuous communication with the Director.

Financial Agreements: These will be forwarded to your child's site for your signature either at the beginning of the school year or upon registration. It is required that these be reviewed, signed and returned to the Program Office within a two week period or suspension may be enforced.

Absences: Please notify the Director by phone or in writing as early as possible regarding your child's absences. Leave a message (prior to 2PM). We need to know where your child is every day for their safety and our accountability.

**Notifications of Planned Absences:** Please notify the Site Director if your child(ren) will not be attending YMCA Childcare for any reason. If your child(ren) do not sign in at YMCA Childcare on a usual day of attendance and the Site Director has not been notified, the following steps will be taken until the child's whereabouts have been confirmed:

1. School Office will be called to verify the child's attendance in school that day.
2. Parents will be called.
3. Emergency contacts will be called.
4. If the Site Director is unable to reach a parent or an emergency contact, it will be assumed that there is a problem and **THE POLICE WILL BE CALLED.**

**(Please help us avoid any alarming situations by keeping us informed of any planned absences.)**

***Please Note: If parents do not follow above procedures, a written warning will be given. If repeated, we will assess a \$10 fee and increase the fee to \$20 for any subsequent times. After 3 times, the child may be dropped from the program.***

Illness: Fees will not be reduced for brief absences due to illness, etc. When you enroll your child(ren), you are reserving the time, space, staffing and program materials for your child whether s/he attends or not.

Credit for Extended Child Illness: You may receive illness credit for any continuous absence of 5 consecutive days or more, limited to 1 month in extenuating circumstances. You need to notify the Director of extended absence due to illness and apply for a credit in writing to the Program Office. A doctor's notice is required for credit due to extended illness.

Vacation: Two weeks per year may be taken as vacation without paying tuition fees. Vacation credit must be requested in writing 14 days prior to the start of the vacation. Vacation credit is given for 1 week or 2 weeks (consisting of consecutive days) increments only - not broken into singular days.

During Winter and Spring Break this vacation may be taken and credit will be given only for Option C & D as long as notice is given.

***No verbal requests will be processed; everything must be done via a Change Request form or at least in writing.***

Late Pick-up: The YMCA Childcare Program is open until 6:00 PM, Monday - Friday. Our staff cannot leave until every child is picked up, and we ask that you are sensitive to appointments or commitments they may have after 6:00. Please make every effort to pick up your child on time. If you are going to be late, please contact the Site Director. If we have tried to contact you and all emergency contacts and it has been one hour, the police will be called to assist in the situation. There will be a \$1.00 surcharge per minute, per child, that a child remains after 6:00 PM. This surcharge will be assessed on your following month's bill. Following three late pick ups within a 30 day period, your child may be suspended from the program.

Extra Care: If you're to pick your child up by 2, 3, 4 or 5 PM or any other designated time and are late, you will be charged a additional fee based upon \$5.10 per hour or portion thereof on your next month's bill, whether it was 15 minutes or 1 hour. If for any reason you need care beyond the hours you contracted, charges will be added on your next month's bill. Regardless of whether the extra time was prearranged or not, the fee is \$5.10 per hour.

Program Withdrawal: You may withdraw your child from the program at any time with a **written two week notice**. However, if a refund is due and a written two week notice is not received, a refund will not be granted. Re-admittance to the program will depend on space availability. If you withdraw with no notice, you are responsible for the two weeks even if your child is not attending. **Refund applies only to the month that you are withdrawing. Since the fees are prorated and spread evenly over the entire school year, there may be additional money owed for care used.**

Change of Schedule: If you wish to change your child's days of attendance, the Site Director must approve this. You may only change your child's schedule or Option Plan **twice during the school year**. (Option plans must be submitted prior to Winter Break with two weeks written notice.) This is due to the impact on the childcare program in regards to billing, planning, staffing and programming. Changes may only be made if there is space available.

These steps need to be followed when making a schedule change:

1. Changes must be made two weeks prior to going into effect.
2. When a change is being made, it needs to be done by using the Change Request Form. These forms are available at the site or the Program Office. ***No verbal requests or “after the fact changes” will be granted.***
3. The change needs to be approved prior to its implementation.

We must be notified of these changes by the 14th of each month for the change to go into effect by the 1st of the following month and be reflected on the following month's bill.

Contact Information Changes: Please notify your Director and the Billing Department in writing of any address/phone number changes.

Fees: Fees are due and payable by the 1st of each month. A \$20 flat late fee will be charged if Balance Due is not received by the 1st. Delinquent fees will result in the termination of services and legal action being pursued.

Missed School Day: If a child does not attend school for a full day (no matter the reason), or goes home sick, they will not be allowed to participate in Sunshine Company for that day.

Natural Disaster Policy: If school closes due to a natural disaster, childcare will also be closed. If school is open, the childcare program will also be open. If school is open when a natural disaster happens, childcare facilities may need to close if conditions have become unsafe. This policy is based on safety for the children first.

Suspension from School: If a child is suspended from school for any cause, the YMCA Childcare Program cannot include the child in the program during suspension. No credit will be given for these missed days.

Exclusion from Program Due to Illness: State licensing requires us to refuse admittance to any child who shows sign of illness. Should any parent or guardian become aware of communicable disease or exposure, with the child or family, the center must be informed immediately in order that we may inform others. If your child becomes ill while at the center, a parent, guardian or someone on the authorization list will be contacted to pick up the child immediately.

Some symptoms that may predicate exclusion are high fever, diarrhea, vomiting, signs of infection, weeping eyes, communicable diseases (i.e., chicken pox, head lice), undiagnosed skin rash, persistent and congested cough, etc. Children must be symptom-free for 24 hours in order to return. In the case of head lice, children must be nit-free to return. (Refer to Health & Safety Section.)

**Children who become ill at school will not be accepted at any YMCA childcare program.**

Toileting: It is important that children be able to use the bathroom facilities without adult assistance. It is understood that on occasion children may have a toileting accident. They must be able to change clothes and clean themselves. Parents will be called if a child refuses to do so. YMCA staff will not change children's clothing. If you feel your child might need a change of clothes for whatever reason, please feel free to send a bag of clothes labeled with the child's initials.

**Communication File:** Each child has a file folder with their name on it called our "Communication File".

It is the parents' responsibility to check this file daily for notices, calendars, "Ouch Reports", and newsletters. If you do not check this file, we cannot assure you of complete communication.

**Telephone Answering Policy:** During periods of operation at the child care facility, staff are not always available to answer calls. The answering machine is on at these times.

Because the staff are often within hearing distance of the phone, someone may pick-up the line if they hear you state that your call is an emergency. If you call regarding an emergency at a time when the staff are outside or do not hear the call, please state clearly that your call is an emergency and leave your name, and number where you can be reached. Your call will be responded to immediately when calls are checked. If you need to reach someone more immediately, you can call the program office at 544-1829 to help facilitate this process.

**Field Trips:** The YMCA Childcare Program will on occasion take walking field trips and staff will notify parents two days prior to the trip of the activity. Field trips to locations in Sonoma County by bus may occur. When such a trip is planned, a signed permission slip will be required. A nominal fee may be charged.

**Children with Special Needs:** Our child to staff ratio is 1:14, therefore if your child requires assistance during the school day, he/she may be required to have the same assistance for the childcare program. Children with special needs may participate in YMCA Childcare Programs provided there is no adverse effect upon other program participants, either through direct behavior of the child or by taking away staff time needed by the other children in our care.

A meeting with the Director will take place prior to the start of the child participating in the program.

The YMCA encourages parents with children of special needs to strongly consider if placement at a YMCA Childcare Program is the most appropriate placement for their child.

**Movie Policy:** Movies are not to be shown on a weekly basis as part of the regular scheduled programming. Movies scheduled as part of a site's programming will be shown no more than once a month. Exceptions to this rule are made during emergency staffing situations, when there has been excessive rain, or in case of an emergency where we need to pre-occupy the children and keep them confined to one space. Movie ratings should be G, unless the Director has distributed a list of possible PG movie choices to the parents and asked for any objections to movies on the list. Movies above a PG rating will never be shown at a site.

**Homework Policy:** Each childcare location provides a supervised homework time. Children are supervised by a staff person and help is available to them. Children are encouraged to do their homework during this time. The YMCA is not a tutoring service but will attempt to cooperate with requests from teachers and parents about an individual child and homework. Any questions or concerns regarding homework should be brought to the attention of the site director.

**Subsidized Care through Social Service Agencies:**

**Registering:** You need to provide the YMCA with documentation that you are eligible and/or approved for subsidized services through a specified agency.

Registration Fee: You are responsible for paying the annual non-refundable registration fee at the time of enrollment. The YMCA will be your subsidy agency in accordance with their regulations. If your subsidy agency pays the YMCA for the fee or any portion thereof, the YMCA will reimburse you the amount paid.

Monthly Timesheets: Your subsidy agency requires that you complete their monthly attendance record in order to reimburse your childcare provider. The attendance record is to be filled out daily by the parent/legal guardian or other authorized signers. The YMCA may terminate childcare if the time sheets are not filled out properly. It is your responsibility to make sure they are completed on time, otherwise the YMCA will not be paid by the subsidy agency. Any unpaid childcare costs will be billed to the parent/legal guardian.

Extra Hours, Late Pick-up, Extra Days: You are contracted for a set schedule by your agency and the YMCA. If you are late picking up your child, or use extra hours/days, you will be responsible for paying these fees to the YMCA, as they are not covered by the agency.

Schedule Changes: All schedule changes require a two week written notice. The requested change must be approved by your case manager, the site director, and the social service coordinator before it can take effect.

Family Fees/Co-Pays: All family fees/co-pays set by your agency will be billed to you by the YMCA and will be due the month before care is used. Fees billed are an approximate amount based on contracted time, and any additional hours will be billed to you on the following month. If fees are not received within 14 days of due date, a late fee of \$20 will be assessed.

## Information and Discipline Policy Statement

Children are expected to maintain reasonable behavior at childcare as a condition of continued service. Children whose behavior has an adverse effect on the other children, either directly or through requiring staff time which is needed by other children, cannot be offered services.

In general, rules are made by the staff and children. Discipline is designed to promote the development of self-direction, self-control, and socially acceptable behavior. This is accomplished through sensitivity, consistency, firmness, fairness, and follow-through.

Any form of discipline involves specific learning processes. Therefore, we must be very certain that the child is perceiving a positive rather than a negative picture of him or herself as an acceptable person and that only his/her actions are criticized.

The YMCA believes that children need both clear and consistent guidelines which serve to maintain health, safety, and respect for self and others.

If a problem arises, the following techniques will be utilized:

1. Encourage positive behavior.
2. Staff will redirect child's inappropriate behavior to a more acceptable behavior.
3. A reminder of the rules and a discussion of the problem and consequences will take place with the child.
4. If the behavior is of a serious nature and/or the child has not responded to redirection, the child will be removed from the activity. This time out will be for approximately five minutes. Other "duty-oriented"

methods of discipline suitable to the behavior may be used (i.e., children go in bathrooms, throw spitballs, flood bathroom - they would be asked to clean up the mess).

5. If necessary, a parent conference will be held to further address the problem. Parents will be informed of the problem and be involved in the solution. A behavior contract will be implemented.
6. If the problem persists and the child continues to disrupt the on-going program or shows disregard for staff direction, the YMCA reserves the right to suspend the child for one day up to permanent termination.

\* In extreme cases if we feel the child's safety or the safety of others is in jeopardy, you will be asked to immediately remove your child for the day and a conference will be held.

**Please refer to and make note of the Code of Conduct Guidelines enclosed in the Parent Packet.**

No form of physical punishment, corporal punishment or violation of personal rights will be tolerated by the YMCA in the disciplining of children. Staff will not tease or belittle children.

Swearing and foul language by children or adults, including parents or guardians, is not acceptable.

Property Damage: If property damage occurs due to a child's actions (in or outside of the site), the parent could be held financially responsible to repair or replace the damage item(s).

Children are responsible for:

1. For learning to take the consequences for their own actions.
2. For respecting the rules that guide them during the program day, for controlling their feelings so that their actions do not harm anyone in the program.
3. For not willfully destruction of or harming any equipment or property in the building or anyone else's while they are in the program.
4. For sharing equipment and facilities with all children in the program.
5. For remaining with a staff member at all times and notifying them if they need to go to another area.
6. For coming immediately after school, unless they advise a staff member otherwise.
7. For respecting the rules of the Before/After School Program.
8. For returning materials and equipment to the place they found them for other children to find before taking out a new activity.
9. For carrying out an activity that they committed themselves to.
10. Leave all personal belongings at home (toys, pets, etc.).

Parents are responsible for:

1. Accepting and respecting the right of the child care staff to maintain order.
2. Reviewing and abiding by all procedures detailed in this brochure and explaining them to their children.
3. Cooperating with staff by carrying out appropriate discipline techniques.
4. Seeking advice from the staff and other appropriate agencies for assistance in improving the behavior of their children.
5. Notifying Director if child will be absent from program, before their scheduled arrival time. Refer to page 7 regarding this policy.
6. Paying monthly bill by the 1st of each month.
7. It is advisable to label all clothing with the child's initials, if not their full name.

8. Meeting with the Director if needed, regarding your child's behavior.

Staff Members are responsible for:

1. Reviewing and explaining the rules.
2. Establishing and modeling an environment of appropriate behavior.
3. Communicating with children and parents about behavior problems and proposed solutions.

*If at any time you have questions regarding discipline, please talk to your Site Director.*

## Health and Safety

Health and Safety: Our facilities and staff comply with the Licensing standards of the State of California.

The center meets state and local regulations concerning fire and building codes, zoning, health and sanitation. In addition, the YMCA Childcare Program follows recommendations on National YMCA Standards set for YMCA School-Age Day Care.

Daily Health Check: Your child's health state will be observed each day. This is done informally; however, if your child appears to show signs of illness, a more formal evaluation will be done (temperature taken, check for swollen glands, rashes, etc.). If program personnel determine your child to be ill, the parent will be called and expected to pick up child within one hour. If a child has a contagious illness (e.g., pink eye, chicken pox, etc) or has a temperature of a 100 or higher, the child may not participate until the childcare site receives doctor's clearance. Remember, if your child has an illness and they do not attend school, then they may not attend YMCA childcare either. The child must be without symptoms/fever for at least 24 hours before returning to Sunshine Co. If the child is too sick to participate in the daily program, the child is too sick to be at the YMCA.

Exclusion From Center: Please refer to Policy section (Pages 11)

First Aid: All staff are certified in Basic First Aid and CPR. First Aid supplies kept on hand include:

- A First Aid manual
- Sterile First Aid dressings
- Bandages and roller bandages
- Scissors
- Thermometer
- Antiseptic ointment

Illness/Injury: If your child is injured, the staff will take whatever steps necessary to obtain emergency medical care if warranted. These steps may include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Attempt to contact a parent or guardian.
- b. Attempt to contact you through any of the persons listed on the emergency information form you completed for us.
- c. If we cannot contact you, we will do any or all of the following:
  - (1) call an ambulance / paramedics, (2) have the child taken to an emergency hospital in the company of a staff member.

***PLEASE NOTE: The YMCA does not provide medical or hospital insurance for medical costs incurred by individuals in our program. Therefore, any cost incurred should be covered under your personal insurance.***

Medication: We can only dispense medication if it is in the original container with the doctor's prescription attached. A medication release letter must be written and given to the Site Director along with the medication.

"Over the counter" medicine will only be administered if a written order from the child's physician accompanies it.

No medication may be in the possession of children (**this includes cough drops, vitamins, etc.**).

Allergies: It is critical that you let your Site Director know of any known allergies your child might have.

Accident/Injury Reports: Parents are informed through our "Ouch Report" when an accident or injury occurs which requires basic First Aid. These reports are informational consisting of how the injury occurred and what was done.

Head Lice: Head Lice is very common among school-age children. Therefore, if your child develops head lice, we need your help to control and prevent the spreading of this condition. Please follow the following procedures:

1. Examine your children carefully for any signs of lice and nits.
2. If you find lice or nits, follow treatment recommendations and report symptoms to YMCA childcare personnel.
3. Children with lice or nits will be excluded from the YMCA Childcare Program until treatment is given. Inspections will be carried out by YMCA personnel prior to re-admission.

**In order for a child to return to the program after treatment, their hair must be nit (egg) free. If we have knowledge of a lice problem in the program, we will inspect the children's hair for lice. If a child is found to have lice, the guardian is notified and must pick the child up. When conducting lice checks, we want to ensure that the children's feelings aren't hurt and that they don't feel singled out. As mentioned previously, lice is a common problem and our goal is to deal with it in an efficient manner so the problem doesn't escalate. If a child is sent home three (3) times with head lice or nits, they will not be able to return for 5 school days (after the 3<sup>rd</sup> time) and will need a doctor's notice stating a clean bill of health.**

#### Ways to prevent the spread of head lice

- Do not use personal items belonging to others (combs, hair brushes, towels, hats, clothing, etc.)
- Avoid hanging hats and coats on the same hook with others' clothing.
- Learn to recognize signs of head louse infestation and check for them if a child or family member scratches their head often.
- Treat promptly when head lice are found.
- **Notify others** (school nurse, teacher, friend's parents).

- State of Calif. Health & Welfare Agency

## General Information

**Snacks:** Children in the afternoon program receive a healthy daily snack. Monthly Snack Calendars will be posted. If your child doesn't like the snack, please send an alternative. If your child has any dietary restrictions, be sure to indicate them on the medical form and send a note to the Director. Children in the Kindergarten program must bring a lunch and drink, this might vary depending on the school schedule. Also, if your child stays after 5 PM, you might want to send an extra snack in case they become hungry. Food sent with your child should not need to be heated.

On Full Day Programs, children must bring AM snack, lunch and drink (Please do not send soda or foods that require heating. )

**Birthdays:** A child's birthday is a day of celebration! Some sites will acknowledge this happy occasion. If parents would like, they can send a special snack to share. Arrangements should be made with Director.

**Change of Clothing:** Our activities are fun and some times messy. We cannot limit a child's activities because of the clothing worn. Clothing should be comfortable and suitable to the weather conditions for outdoor play. An extra set of clothing may be left at the site in a bag marked with the child's name. Please mark all belongings. The center will not be responsible for any articles of clothing left at the center.

**Your Child's Projects:** Your child puts a tremendous amount of effort into his/her projects and is anxious to share them with you. It is important that you check at the site each day for any treasures that are ready to go home.

**Personal Belongings:** Children are not allowed to bring personal belongings such as toys, games, electronic devices, cell phones, or trading card games to day care. We also discourage children from bringing valued treasures from home since it is difficult to keep track of these items. Please label clearly any items your child does bring to the site. We cannot be responsible for lost or broken items.

**School Problems:** Any trouble your child may have at school will probably affect his or her behavior during our After School program. Please keep us informed of such problems so that we can be sensitive to your child's needs. The YMCA would like to work as a team with school and family. This will enable us to provide the best environment for your child's growth and development.

**Lost and Found:** The YMCA is not responsible for any lost or stolen items or articles. Lost and Found items will be kept for one month. Clothing left at the site for a period of one month or more will be donated to Goodwill. Please make a point to check for lost items at least once a week.

*Mark all belongings clearly with your child's first and last name (i.e., lunch boxes, back packs, coats/sweaters, notebooks, etc.).*

Inspection Authority  
by Community Care Licensing

The Department or licensing agency shall have the authority to interview children or staff, and to inspect and audit child or facility records without prior consent.

- (1) The licensee shall make provisions for private interviews with any child(ren), or any staff member; and for the examination of all records relating to the operation of the facility.

The Department or licensing agency shall have the authority to observe the physical condition of the child(ren), including conditions which could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement, and to have a licensed medical physician examine the child(ren).

The childcare staff are mandated reporters and required to report any signs of neglect, abuse, etc.

**Complaint Procedure:** Parents understand they have the right to call or write the licensing agency if fault is found in the operation of the facility or treatment of their child. Call or write:

Community Care Licensing  
101 Golf Course Drive, Suite A230  
Rohnert Park, CA 94928  
(707) 588-5026

## Parent Involvement

Parents are always welcome to observe our program, help in some way or share a skill. If you would like to share a special talent, please let your Site Director know so that this can be scheduled.

Special Events: will be held periodically in the evenings for your families to participate in - your children want you to see what they are doing at YMCA Childcare, so your attendance is encouraged!

Donated Items: Our program can always use items which you may no longer want: games, craft items, children's music tapes, recyclable items, etc. Occasionally, lists of needed items will be distributed. Some sites do a monthly pyramid program in which each month, different items are requested for donation. Please inquire at your child's site.

And Remember: You can help your child receive the maximum benefit of their time at YMCA Childcare if you:

1. Take home projects.
2. Check communication file on a daily basis.
3. Read all notices and information.
4. Always sign your child in/out, with your full legal signature.
5. Label coats, belongings, etc.
6. Check bulletin boards.
7. Smile and encourage them to talk about their day.
8. Give them lots of hugs.
9. Participate in Family Events

Parent Advisory Committee: If you are interested in serving on a committee of parents, please let your Site Director know.

Parent/Staff Conferences: Parent/Director conferences may be arranged at any time by request by the parent or Site Director. Parents are encouraged to express any concerns informally to the Site Director at any time. At the time of a scheduled conference, other staff members may be invited to attend.

Annual Support Campaign: - Volunteers are needed each year in February for the Annual Support Campaign. During this campaign over 100 volunteers raise money for the Outreach Scholarship fund that helps people use the YMCA and its programs that could not otherwise afford to.

Newsletters/Communication Files: Each month a site specific newsletter will be provided detailing upcoming events. In addition, the Communication File may have additional specific information for parents. Please read information sent home - *it's important!*

## The YMCA is a Resource

The YMCA, in addition to offering quality child care programs, is also a non-profit agency that is a resource for families. If you have problems or concerns in the stresses of family life, we can assist you by referring to other service agencies, parenting groups, etc. which provide help to families.

Sonoma County Family YMCA has a variety of quality programs that you may be interested in for your family.

- Summer camps --Day, Specialty & Resident Camps, Caravans and Moving- On Camp
- Monthly overnights held at our downtown Santa Rosa facility for children ages 6-11. Your child will love these nights of supervised fun!
- Swimming lessons
- Aikido
- Tumbling
- Youth Fun Days
- Parent/Child Programs
- Teen Programs
- YBL (Youth Basketball League) – Fall and Spring
- Track and Field - Spring
- T-Ball-Spring

Call the YMCA for a list of other ongoing family events throughout the year!!

Visit the YMCA at 1111 College Avenue in Santa Rosa and pick up a brochure and take a tour.

### YMCA Membership Benefits

Your registration/Program Membership fee reserves your child's space for attendance at childcare during the school year and gives you a Program Membership to the YMCA. With this Program Membership, you are entitled to the following:

- Lower program rates for many YMCA programs, such as: Camp, Swim Lessons, Youth Overnights
- Reduced rate for Youth Day Passes (regular non-member rate is \$4, Program Member rate is \$2)
- Families will receive YMCA newsletter

The registration/Program Membership fee is non-refundable unless the YMCA cancels the childcare program. This fee is charged each spring and is required for enrollment each year. The Sunshine Registration/Program Membership fee expires on August 31 of each year.